

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO CINCPAC FOR POLAD

S E C R E T STATE 016497

EXDIS

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM KABUL DATED JANUARY 24, 1974 SENT
ACTION SECSTATE WASHDC INFO ISLAMABAD, LONDON, MOSCOW, NEW
DELHI, TEHRAN IS REPEATED TO YOU: QUOTE

S E C R E T KABUL 0497

EXDIS

DEPT PASS CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PK, AF, US, IN

SUBJECT: ARMS POLICY

REF: (A) ISLAMABAD 0082; (B) NEW DELHI 0508

1. LIKE OUR COLLEAGUES IN NEW DELHI, WE IN KABUL HAVE READ WITH
GREAT INTEREST AMBASSADOR BYROADE'S MESSAGES CONCERNING OUR MILITARY
RELATIONSHIP WITH PAKISTAN. I AGREE WITH AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN
THAT WE NEED MORE DIALOGUE ON THIS QUESTION. I NOW PLAN TO MAKE
MY ONCE-POSTPONED VISIT TO ISLAMABAD FEB. 10-12; AND BOTH
AMBASSADORS BYROADE AND MOYNIHAN ARE WELCOME AT ANY TIME TO COME
UP THE KHYBER.

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2. WE HAVE NO QUARREL WITH THE FIGURES ON EQUIPMENT IN AMBASSADOR
BYROADE'S 0082, WITH THE TWO CAVEATS THAT AFGHAN PROFICIENCY IN
HANDLING MODERN WEAPONRY IS UNTESTED AND ASSUMED BY MOST OBSERVERS
TO BE POOR AND THAT AFGHANISTAN IS CURRENTLY RECEIVING MORE EQUIPMENT,

ESPECIALLY TANKS AND APC'S. HOW MUCH NEW EQUIPMENT IS COMING IN AND WILL BE COMING IN OVER THE NEXT MONTHS WE SIMPLY DON'T KNOW. (WHO KNOWS;

PERHAPS IT'S 180,600 TANKS. THERE MAY HAVE BEEN A TYPE IN THAT OVERPAID AGENT'S REPORT.) WHATEVER THE FIGURE, WE DO KNOW THAT DAOUD IS INTENT UPON FURTHER MODERNIZATION AND BUILD-UP OF HIS ARMY AND AIR FORCE. WE ALSO KNOW THAT HE IS PURSUING THIS POLICY BECAUSE HIS ARMED FORCES ARE ESSENTIAL FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF HIS REGIME, BECAUSE THEY ARE THE SINGLE CENTRALIZING FORCE IN THE AFGHAN BODY POLITIC, BECAUSE HE BELIEVES AFGHANISTAN MUST HAVE A STRONG DEFENSIVE POSTURE VIA-A-VIS PAKISTAN AND BECAUSE HE HAS A DREAM, CALLED PUSHTUNISTAN.

2. WE ALSO AGREE WITH AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN THAT WHAT WE SEEK IN SOUTH ASIA IS STABILITY. AS FAR AS AFGHANISTAN IS CONCERNED, WE HAVE VIRTUALLY NO INTEREST IN THIS COUNTRY EXCEPT TO MAINTAIN SUFFICIENT INFLUENCE SO AS TO ATTEMPT TO PREVENT AFGHANISTAN FROM DISRUPTING REGIONAL STABILITY. ALTHOUGH OUR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND PEACE CORPS PROGRAMS HERE ARE ALSO BASED ON HUMANITARIANISM AND BROTHERHOOD, TWO CONCEPTS WHICH I HOPE EVEN HARVARD UNIVERSITY WILL CONTINUE TO FAVOR, THEIR PRINCIPAL JUSTIFICATION HAS BEEN AND STILL IS THE ENTREE THEY PROVIDE FOR US TO INFLUENCE AFGHANISTAN'S POLICIES. THE AFGHANS, FOR THEIR PART, PROBABLY CARE LESS ABOUT HUMANITARIANISM AND BROTHERHOOD THAN WE DO, BUT THEY, INCLUDING DAOUD, WELCOME AN ACTIVE AND VISIBLE AMERICAN PRESENCE HERE AS A DEMONSTRATION OF THEIR NON-ALIGNMENT AND A BALANCE TO THE MUCH LARGE SOVIET PRESENCE. MOREOVER, AFGHANISTAN IS A STRIKINGLY POOR COUNTRY AND WILL ACCEPT ASSISTANCE GLADLY FROM ANY QUARTER.

4. IF I READ AMBASSADOR BYROADE CORRECTLY, HE IS CONCERNED THAT OUR INFLUENCE WITH THE PAK MILITARY, AN INFLUENCE ALSO IMPORTANT TO OUR INTEREST IN REGIONAL STABILITY, IS JEOPARDIZED AS WE CONTINUE TO HAVE TO ANSWER "NOTHING" TO THE QUESTION "WHAT HAVE YOU DONE FOR US LATELY?" AFGHAN REACTION TO OUR DOING SOMETHING FOR THE PAK MILITARY WOULD DEPEND ON WHAT THAT SOMETHING WOULD
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BE. THE ANCIEN REGIME, I AM TOLD, DIDN'T REACT AT ALL TO THE PROVISION OF 300 APC'S. I DOUBT THAT EVEN THE DAOUD REGIME WOULD PAY MUCH ATTENTION IF WE WERE TO RETROFIT M-47 AND M-48 TANKS TO WHICH ITS TANKS WOULD STILL BE SUPERIOR IN ARMOR AND FIREPOWER. IF WE WERE TO SUPPLY NEW, LETHAL END-ITEMS, SUCH AS AIRCRAFT OR SAMs, HOWEVER, THE DAOUD REGIME WOULD NOT ONLY BE UNHAPPY WITH US BUT WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY TURN TO THE SOVIETS FOR MORE OF THE SAME, WITH THE INDIANS NO DOUBT EGGING THEM ON. AFGHAN REACTION TO THE RUMORED PAK-FRENCH DEAL IS A CASE IN POINT.

5. I AM NOT RPT NOT ADVOCATING RENEWED US MILITARY SUPPLY TO PAKISTAN. WHETHER TO REOPEN THAT PANDORA'S BOX CAN BEST BE JUDGED OVERALL ELSEWHERE. BUT SO FAR AS THE AFGHANS ALONE ARE CONCERNED,

WITHIN THE ABOVE- MENTIONED LIMITS WE COULD DO SOMETHING MORE FOR
PAKISTAN IN THE ARMS FIELD WITHOUT MAJOR DAMAGE TO OUR POSITION IN
AFGHANISTAN OR CONTRIBUTING TO THE ALREADY ONGOING BUILD-UP OF
THE AFGHAN ARMED FORCES. WE COULD EVEN USE WITH THE AFGHANS, WITH
SOME EFFECT, THE ARGUMENT THAT THEY SHOULD PREFER TO HAVE THE US
CONTINUE TO HAVE SOME INFLUENCE WITH THE PAK MILITARY RATHER THAN TO
HAND THE JOB ENTIRELY TO THE CHINESE OR THE FRENCH.

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